

§598.605 Implementation plan.

(a) *Implementation plan content.* An EZ must submit an implementation plan for HUD approval that addresses each project or activity proposed to be undertaken by the EZ with HUD EZ Grant Funds. The implementation plan must:

- (1) Describe the project or activity;
- (2) Identify the completion date or duration of the project or activity;
- (3) Provide the total cost of the project or activity;
- (4) Identify the amount of HUD EZ Grant Funds to be used for the project or activity; and
- (5) Include a narrative description of how the project or activity meets the resident benefit and economic development standards of this subpart.

(b) *Proposed funded project or activity.* The project or activity proposed in the implementation plan is subject to the following requirements:

- (1) The Federal requirements listed in 24 CFR 5.105;
- (2) The governmentwide, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State, Local and Federally Recognized Indian Tribal Governments at 24 CFR part 85;
- (3) The requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (URA) (42 U.S.C. 4601 et seq.);
- (4) The environmental review and approval requirements of 24 CFR part 50;
- (5) The provisions of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) setting forth the obligations and requirements that the state and local governments, as Empowerment Zone designees, have agreed to meet as signatories of the agreement.
- (6) Recipients of the HUD EZ Grant Funds also must adhere to the requirements set forth in the provisions of the grant agreement for HUD EZ Grant Funds.

§598.610 Resident benefit standards.

The project or activity described in an implementation plan submitted for HUD approval by an EZ to describe the planned use of HUD EZ Grant Funds must meet one of the following three standards of resident benefit for determining the amount of HUD EZ Grant

Funds that may be used to fund a particular project or activity:

(a) *Principal benefit standard*—(1) *Benefits other than jobs.* If a majority (51 percent) of the direct beneficiaries of the project or activity described in the implementation plan reside within the EZ, the project or activity may be fully assisted with HUD EZ Grant Funds.

(2) *Jobs benefit.* In any case where the direct benefits to be provided by a project or activity described in an implementation plan will be in the form of jobs, the project may be fully assisted with HUD EZ Grant Funds if at least 35 percent of the jobs are taken by, or made available to, EZ residents. A job satisfies this 35 percent requirement if the EZ resident is employed by the employer for at least 90 days during the year. For purposes of this 35 percent requirement, an employer may rely on a certification by the employee that provides to the employer the address of the employee's principal residence, and requires the employee to notify the employer of a change of the employee's principal residence.

(3) *Presumed benefit.* Certain commercial revitalization activities that are located and undertaken in an EZ and that provide services to both EZ residents and non-residents (e.g., supermarkets, drug stores) will presume to meet the 51 percent principal benefit standard in paragraph (a)(1) of this section, provided that the EZ maintains written documentation that briefly describes the activity, its service area, and the rationale for presuming that the activity meets the 51 percent principal benefit standard.

(b) *Proportional benefit standard.* If a project or activity described in an implementation plan cannot meet the principal benefit standard of paragraph (a) of this section, the percent of the cost of the project or activity that may be assisted with HUD EZ Grant Funds may not be greater than the percent of all persons benefiting directly from the project or activity who reside within the EZ.

(c) *Exception criterion.* In any case where a proposed project or activity, including activities outside of the designated area, would not meet the standards of paragraph (a) or paragraph (b) of this section, HUD EZ

Grant Funds may be used where HUD determines that an implementation plan, accompanied by the facts that the EZ requests HUD to review and consider as justifying the exception, demonstrates substantial benefits to the EZ that would result from the project or other compelling reasons justifying the appropriateness of the implementation plan to the EZ's strategic plan. A request by an EZ for an exception under paragraph (c) of this section will receive a response by HUD no later than 60 days from the date of the EZ's request provided that the EZ's request with all relevant information is considered complete no later than 45 days from the date of the EZ's request.

§ 598.615 Economic development standards.

(a) *Economic development standards.* The project or activity in an implementation plan submitted for HUD approval by an EZ to describe the planned use of HUD EZ Grant Funds must meet one of the following economic development standards:

(1) *Business development assistance.* An activity that involves assisting a business in the EZ meets the standard, whether or not the business will create any new jobs. Any such activity must also meet the standards for benefiting a sufficient portion of EZ residents as required under § 598.610. Qualifying activities include the use of HUD EZ Grant Funds to:

- (i) Assist in establishing a business;
- (ii) Expand a business, including efforts to stimulate the development or expansion of microenterprises; and
- (iii) Assisting businesses that provide goods or services within the EZ to remain within the EZ.

(2) *Employment training and assistance.* An activity that assists a person to take, or remain in, a job, subject to meeting the standards for benefiting a sufficient proportion of EZ residents as required under § 598.610, including:

- (i) Job training;
- (ii) Provision of child care;
- (iii) Transportation to or from the place of employment or the place where job training is taking place; or
- (iv) Counseling persons on job-related skills, such as how to interview suc-

cessfully for a job, and dress and act appropriately in the conduct of a job.

(3) *Educational assistance.* The provision of educational assistance meets the economic development standard only if the EZ's implementation plan demonstrates that such education will be provided to persons who cannot qualify for available jobs because of the lack of some specific knowledge that would be given them through the course(s) to be provided. Any educational assistance provided must also meet the standard for benefiting a sufficient portion of EZ residents as required under § 598.610.

(4) *EZ administrative capacity.* An activity that increases the capacity of governance board members or staff of the EZ's lead agency to carry out their roles with respect to economic development projects expected to be assisted in support of the EZ's strategic plan is eligible. This includes the cost of attending a conference on economic development. The use of HUD EZ Grant Funds for capacity building under this paragraph is deemed to provide adequate benefit to EZ residents.

(5) *Public improvements.* The provision of public improvements, such as extension of water or sewer capacity, or street widening, meets the economic development standard only if it is shown in the implementation plan that the lack of the improvements clearly is an impediment to the establishment, expansion or retention of one or more businesses in the EZ, and that the provision of the proposed public improvement would be limited as much as feasible to assisting the business or businesses. Any public improvements must also meet the standard for benefiting a sufficient portion of EZ residents as required under § 598.610.

(b) *Exception request.* HUD may approve a project or activity that does not fall within any of the previous review standards of this section if the EZ provides evidence that, in some way, the project or activity can reasonably be seen as meeting the economic development standard. Such a project or activity must also meet the standards for benefiting a sufficient portion of EZ residents as required under § 598.610. All requests for such an exception must be in writing, accompanied by the facts